

EVANGELICAL CHRISTENDOM.

advance of Islam among pagan races, constitute an appeal to the Christian Church to pray, with an urgency which cannot be exaggerated, asking most earnestly that the spirit of grace and supplication in immensely increased measure may be granted to her.

"The Conference welcomes the cycles of prayer for various Moslem lands, forwarded by Miss Van Sommer, and cordially recommends these booklets to be used by friends of the work in those several regions.

"URGENCY OF THE MOHAMMEDAN PROBLEM.

"IV. That this Conference, in view of the steady advance of Islam, not only among various animistic tribes and other peoples, but also to some extent among historic Christian Churches and recently Christianised pagans, expresses the conviction that it is absolutely necessary that Christendom at large, and more especially the missionary boards and committees of the Churches, which we represent, should forthwith take practical measures for a more comprehensive and systematic prosecution of the work among Moslems.

The Persian Revolution in relation to Religious Change.

THE Revolution has driven the late Shah into exile, established the form of popular government not only in the capital, but in every large town, and has put at the head of affairs Nasir ul Mulk, who is one of the most highly educated as well as universally respected Persians. A beginning in financial reform has been made in the employment of five Americans, picked out for previous experience in the Philippine Islands or the United States. All of these are no small achievements. Whether the constructive forces will be strong enough to secure stable government is perhaps uncertain, but enough has been done to make one doubt the prophecies of speedy dismemberment. Along with this political change it is noticeable that the attitude of the people is favourable to reform. They realise their own need to learn from the West, and they have set themselves to learn. There is also a new hopefulness as to their country and an effort after progress. One living in the country, especially one who has lived in it for some years, sees the evidences of this change in the ordinary course of social or business intercourse, in a new freedom in discussing their own country, and a new desire to learn.

This change is not primarily religious. There is no casting off of Islam; indeed, so far as the constitution goes Islam of the strictest Shiaah sect is established as the State religion, and it is provided that the laws enacted by Parliament should be examined by a committee of *ulema* (doctors of the religious law) to see whether they contravene the sacred law or not. From the liberty guaranteed to the Press is excluded anything contrary to Islam. On the other hand, in spite of strong opposition, a provision was inserted in the Constitution that guarantees to all equality before the law, and Christians have voted in elections and been voted for. So far the effort has been to enlist Islam on the side of progress by

AFRICA THE STRATEGIC CENTRE AT THE PRESENT TIME.

"V. That this Conference is entirely in accord with the finding of the World Missionary Conference of 1910, namely, that without minimising the importance of advance elsewhere, the Continent of Africa is the region upon which our present efforts must be chiefly concentrated to meet the advance of Islam. To effect this purpose we are strongly of opinion (1) that concerted action among missionary boards and organisations is necessary, in order thoroughly to co-ordinate the forces now at work in Africa, and to regulate their distribution in such a manner as to provide a strong chain of mission stations across Africa, the strongest link of which shall be at those points where Moslem advance is most active; (2) that a higher degree of specialisation, alike in the training of missionaries intended for this work and in setting men apart expressly to undertake it, be kept steadily in view; (3) that prompt measures should be adopted to greatly strengthen existing missionary forces in that critical field."

quoting proof texts from the Koran and from the traditions, and in many instances the popular leaders have been mullahs. When the mullahs have been openly opposed to the new cause they have suffered for it, sometimes by loss of influence, sometimes by exile, and in a few cases by death.

While not directly religious, the movement has its religious effects. It promotes a spirit of criticism of religious institutions and persons, and a new freedom in discussing religious questions. There has been an increase of boldness on the part of the *Behais* (or *Bahis*), which shows that they have confidence in the change of attitude. One manifestation of this is the active participation of American *Behais* in the educational work of their Persian brethren. This is remarkable, since the teaching of the *Behais* supplants Islam, Muhammad, and the Koran by a new religion, a new prophet, and a new book. There is also a marked increase in the number of those who reject all revealed religion, professing to be either atheists or pure theists. This tendency is likely to increase. There have come also new opportunities for Christian missionary work. Many are desirous to hear of Christianity, and to discuss its teachings in a friendly way. Many more look to the missionaries and mission schools to help in furnishing education. The freedom to attend these schools has not been seriously opposed, and the number of pupils is increasing. It is, no doubt, a critical time, when wisdom and spiritual power as well as support in means and men are needed. It is an opportunity to make pure Christianity known, such as there has never been in Persia or under any other Mohammedan government. Most of all we need the prayers of Christians that we may be guided aright, and that events may be overruled to bring true freedom and light.

W. A. SHEDD.

Church Unity in China.

THERE is reason to hope that substantial progress towards Church unity in China was made on the occasion of the Centenary Missionary Conference at Shanghai in the spring of 1907, when the following resolution was passed —

"That this Conference unanimously holds the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme standard of faith and practice, and holds firmly the primitive apostolic faith. Further, while acknowledging the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed as substantially expressing the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, the Conference does not adopt any Creed as a basis of Church unity, and leaves confessional questions for future consideration; yet, in view of our knowledge of each other's doctrinal symbols, history, work, and character, we gladly recognise ourselves as already one body in Christ, teaching one way of eternal life, and calling men into one holy fellowship and as one in regard to the great body of doctrine of the Christian faith; one in our teaching as to the love of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; in our testimony as to sin and salvation, and our homage to the Divine and Holy Redeemer of men; one in our call to the purity of the Christian life, and in our witness to the splendours of the Christian hope.

"We frankly recognise that we differ as to methods of administration and Church government, but we unite in holding that these differences do not invalidate the assertion of our real unity in our common witness to the Gospel of the grace of God."

These words, which deserve careful study, were not finally decided upon without a good deal of discussion, relating for the most part to the adoption or otherwise of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as the Creed of the Conference. It was finally agreed that the said Creeds should be acknowledged as "substantially expressing the fundamentals of the Christian faith." It will be observed with satisfaction that the resolution quoted above speaks with no uncertain voice as to the authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and as to the Conference's firm adherence to the primitive apostolic faith. The acknowledgment of the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed as substantially expressing the fundamentals of the Christian faith will also be noted in the resolution. The practical value and importance of these clear, concise statements of faith by the early Church will be recognised, especially when the ambiguous and shifting nature of much present-day religious speculation and teaching are borne in mind. Even more sig-

nificant than the resolution itself was the strong and sincere desire for union which pervaded the whole assembly.

The Conference appointed a representative Standing Committee to take such steps as were open to them towards promoting Church unity in China. Two main lines of thought have found supporters as to methods in securing this end; one being that, as a preliminary step to wider union, each group of denominations of the same or kindred complexion should aim at union amongst themselves as speedily as possible. All the Baptist Churches, for instance, would thus be merged into one great Baptist communion; similarly with the Methodists, and so on. This has already been accomplished in the case of the various Presbyterian Churches represented in China. It has been strongly and widely felt, on the other hand, that, whilst this policy has some advantages, as diminishing the actual number of independent denominations, its practical effect in promoting Church union between Chinese Christians in the same city and neighbourhood is open to serious question. The fact that a Chinese Christian can recognise as fellow Church members people whom he has never seen, residing in distant provinces, whilst he cannot so recognise Christians with whom he is personally acquainted living in the same town as himself, seems not unlikely to emphasise the importance of denominational distinctions in his mind, and, as time goes on, may tend to widen the ecclesiastical difference between himself and his immediate neighbours. From this point of view it would appear to be of greater gain for the cause of real Church unity if, in practice, fellowship and communion between Christians of different denominations living in the same neighbourhood can be strengthened and given adequate manifestation. It would certainly seem of far more importance that Christians in the same neighbourhood should dwell together in unity, than that a merely official union should exist between Church members living at opposite ends of a vast empire.

It will be agreed that the whole subject of Church unity in China wears a somewhat different complexion, and must be approached from a different point of view from that called for in dealing with the same problems in the home lands. Here the question is, How far and in what manner can we improve a condition of ecclesiastical division and confusion inherited from the past? In China the question is, Are we justified in importing such

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a condition of things into that country at all? To this latter question, regarded in the abstract, the answer can only be in the negative. In practice, however, the matter is not so simple. It is easy to say, "Let the Chinese arrange a Church order of their own." Until such a time, however, as the requisite experience and knowledge render them competent to do this, the missionaries are obliged to institute some ecclesiastical arrangements. That such arrangements will bear the impress of the missionaries' own ecclesiastical tenets is unavoidable; as, naturally and rightly, the missionaries are guided by their own conscientious beliefs in these matters. At the same time most, if not all, foreign workers in China recognise the need of the utmost caution, lest a great deal that is simply the outcome of local conditions in their own country, and not the expression of essential principles, should be placed like an incubus upon the young Churches of China.

It will bear repeating that the problem with which the missionaries out there have to deal is not that of Church unity at home, nor even of full adjustment between themselves of their mutual ecclesiastical differences. The essential question is how far and in what manner can the missionary body arrive at some common understanding to present to the Chinese Churches as the basis of a future ecclesiastical unity throughout China? In answer to this it may be said that great progress in the desired direction would be made by a frank recognition on the part of the several Churches of each other's ministry, and by the admission of alternative views in regard to the rite of baptism as a basis of Church membership. There is reason to believe that an arrangement embracing these two important points would meet with wide acceptance both amongst missionaries and Chinese Church leaders. It will probably seem a radical and even startling proposal to many Church leaders and other Christians in this country, and yet the reasons in favour of its adoption in China deserve most earnest consideration. The situation in that country imperatively demands that decided action in this matter should be taken before long. The character and capacity of the Chinese render it certain that, should it not be dealt with before many decades have passed, a large part, if not the whole, of the Chinese Church leaders will adopt an attitude towards missionaries tantamount to saying: "Seeing that you are not able to agree yourselves as to a common Church order and government for our adoption, we must respectfully ask to be excused if we now take the matter in hand for ourselves." Regarded in the abstract, it may be said by some that this would be a good thing; it is certain, however, that in practice a very serious situation, leading to sad confusion and even grave disaster, would supervene. Hence the urgency of this whole subject and the dangers of delay. Surely the circumstance that a vast number of true Christians and of earnest, successful ministers in this country hold

different views as to baptism and yet cordially recognise each other as fellow-members of the great Christian family, even though, through the action of the past, in separate denominations, should go far to prevent our setting up amongst the Chinese this particular barrier to Church union. Again, does not the fact that the blessing of God and the gifts of the Spirit are freely granted to men on different sides of questions relating not only to baptism, but also to church government, and also the fact, now clearly established by centuries of history, that differences of opinion in regard to them will exist so long as the principle of individual freedom of judgment is granted, make it clear that the right and statesmanlike course in China is frankly to broaden our base of ecclesiastical union so as to admit of both? In connection with the important point of mutual recognition of each other's ministerial position it must be owned that a claim on the part of any particular body of ministers to special spiritual prerogatives is inconsistent with such a proposal.

The foregoing remarks have been directed to the more strictly denominational differences, as known in the home lands, which prevent Church unity. It cannot be forgotten, however, that there may be, and frequently are, deeper lines of cleavage between some members of the same denomination than between some members of two or more different ones. Controversies, which in past times were acute and gave rise to certain sects, now no longer agitate the minds of men. New questions, however, arise from time to time and tend to create new lines both of union and disunion.

In attempting to deal with the subject of Church unity, whether in China or elsewhere, the fundamental fact must not be lost sight of that Church union will be of value only in so far as it affords a corporate manifestation of an underlying Christian unity, or, in other words, of a common life in Christ possessing the members joined together in one organisation. Subject to this spiritual—and therefore, in the long run, deeply practical truth—the writer submits that the resolution quoted at the beginning of this paper represents real progress towards furnishing a standard of faith as a basis of Church union in China, seeing that it "holds the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme standard of faith and practice, and holds firmly the primitive apostolic faith," and acknowledges "the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed as substantially expressing the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith."

In conclusion, all will agree that the cause of Church unity anywhere can be greatly advanced by the exercise of Christian courtesy, forbearance, and practical sympathy amongst individuals; by seeking, as occasion offers, on public occasions to hold fellowship with those of other denominations; and, above all, by taking heed to our own personal Christian life, and by prayer offered in a spirit of genuine conviction and faith for the oneness of all true believers. Without these it is to be feared that mere words expressing a desire for unity may resemble the leaves on the barren fig tree, and incur a similar judgment.

D. E. HOSTE.

Notes of Religious Life and Work in France.

It seems as if the spring has opened with a fresh promise of spiritual life and power. From large centres and country districts come reports or announcements of conventions for the deepening of spiritual life, special evangelistic efforts, courses of Bible study, and, in the different synods, serious discussions as to the best means of renewing the spiritual life and power of the Churches.

The visit of Gipsy Smith was again much blessed, the meetings thronged, though it is feared that many could only see and not understand for want of knowing the English language. It is hoped that on any future visit the preacher will consent to work among the French by being translated.

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The longed-for Gospel tent for Paris, due to the initiative of Pastor Saillens, has been set up in a good position close to the Terres Gate of Paris, and was opened on May 7th by a day of consecration services, at which Pastor Saillens was surrounded by many well-known pastors and friends: Lord Radstock, Pastors Charles Merle d'Aubigné, Barde, and others. Young men and ladies volunteered for the service of order, and others for the choir. Much blessing is hoped for.

One bit of encouragement already granted is the effort of a student of the School of Political Science, who had persuaded ten colleagues to accompany him to the meetings of the Christian Convention. They now intend to follow those of the tent. It contains seats for over a thousand persons.

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Pastor Ullern, continuing his evangelistic tour in country districts on the east of France, where in retired villages perched on the mountains it is so impossible to find a hall or any possible gathering place, has had a Gospel Van specially built for him at Berne, which is capable of opening out at the sides, so that its forty small benches will seat some 120 people. The van is drawn by two horses, and contains a small harmonium as well as a book cupboard, and another for the folding beds of the evangelists.

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A new chapel and hall for Gospel meetings has been opened at Cannes, in a central position near the Thermes, by a special series of consecration and Gospel services presided over by Pastor Ch. Dubois, of Geneva. Pastor Frank Thomas held a series of services at Nice during April, while a well-known evangelist, Mr. de St. Vidal, director of the Mission Populaire there for the past five years, laid down the sword and was called to higher service on April 30th. Of a strictly Catholic family of Bordeaux, Mr. de St. Vidal as a young man threw himself into the whirlpool of worldly pleasures, when he was arrested by the means of the Salvation Army and soundly converted, the passion for soul-winning taking possession of him. He worked for some years as a Salvation Army officer, later on leaving, with his devoted wife, a daughter of the venerable Pastor Babut de Nîmes, for missionary work in Madagascar. He entered the service of the Mission Populaire in 1901, and laboured at

Desvres, Limoges, and Nice, everywhere winning sympathy by his cordiality and devotedness.

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The visit of the delegation of the English Christian brotherhoods to Paris was much appreciated, and the meetings were marked with great cordiality and fraternity. The suitability of forming similar brotherhoods as a means of getting into closer touch with those around them was also much discussed at the Free Church Synod held in April at St. Jean-du-Gard. The great upheaval caused by the Separation is already showing itself to have been but a blessing in disguise—perhaps just what was needed to draw many Churches out of an apathetic routine and re-build them, so to speak, on the basis of personal experience.

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A new Evangelical Missionary Alliance specially in favour of Brittany has just been formed, with Pastors Ed. Vaucher as president and E. Bertrand as director. In spite of all the evangelistic efforts, past and present, in France, large districts are still scarcely touched, and notably Brittany. Brittany is one of the largest provinces of France, comprising five departments, and over three million inhabitants, as well as large Breton colonies at Paris, at Havre, and St. Denis. This immense population knows little or nothing of the Gospel, and lives in ignorance and superstition and alcoholism; yet they are of a religious temperament, and were largely gained to the Reform in the sixteenth century, possessing as many as thirty-seven churches. The fanaticism of former years has largely given place to a more liberal spirit, so that the people are open to the Gospel or to atheism and indifference. The efforts made this winter at St. Denis and Concarneau have been very encouraging. The evangelist sent to help pastor Jones has been much blessed, the hall being besieged with bearers at Concarneau. In a neighbouring village they have frequently preached to audiences of 200 to 400 persons. The field is open, but the call is urgent, for freethinkers are already at work.

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The historic strongholds of French Protestantism are to be enriched by a "Museum of the Desert"—a collection of divers souvenirs—letters, portraits of pastors and martyrs who laboured and died for the Faith when it could only be proclaimed in the desert places among the mountains, old engravings, medals, maps used during the war of the Camisards, and other objects relating to those troublous times. These are to be gathered and preserved in the house of Roland, one of the Camisard leaders, at the tiny hamlet of Mas-Soubeyran, not far from St. Jean-du-Gard. We have visited the house, and were shown the dark cellar where Roland was hidden, sometimes for weeks, and whose only access was a ladder under the movable floor of a cupboard. May the memories of those heroes of the past not consist merely in a cult of admiration, but stir all who honour them to emulate their faith and courage by the power of the same Gospel.

M. L.

tional league to prevent war. But this thing we learned—as every thoughtful Christian who ever supports a war must learn—that war is a hell, so wild and insane that it cannot be rationalized or civilized by any device, and that he who backs a war is dragged beyond all his resistance into supporting Antichrist in most hideous forms.

To be sure, I find no satisfaction in the glibly false simplifications of the war issue which seem to content some of my absolutist friends in the pacifist ranks. Stubborn facts, as they seem to me, still make the problem presented by the great war a dubious and twisted matter. This is the very bedevilment of war—it poses a situation where there is no really right thing to be done about it. Everything that anyone can do or leave undone is wrong, from rallying around the flag to washing one's hands of the whole business.

This, indeed, is the starting point for the major changes that have taken place in my thinking during the decade since the war. They could be expanded indefinitely but the gist of the matter can be summed up in a few sentences.

WILL NOT BLESS WAR AGAIN

First, I do not propose to bless war again, or support it, or expect from it any valuable thing. It is an unmitigated curse, and with each change in modern life it becomes more unqualifiedly disastrous. So far as physical and moral devastation is concerned, it makes little difference who wins the war—victors and vanquished alike are involved in a common and monstrous ruin. War's motives, methods, and results are essentially anti-Christian; no device of argument or trick phrase can make war and Christian principles harmonious—I ought to know for I have tried hard enough to achieve that impossible task. The time to say this kind of thing is now. Let a man earn his right to refuse support to another war by explicitly dissociating himself in advance from any faith in war's methods or any willingness to compromise with them.

Second, while this attitude is important to the individual—may at any time become very unpleasantly important—it is not highly significant to the question of war as a whole. Refusing even to pay his poll tax because of the Mexican war, as Henry D. Thoreau once did, is not a very impressive act. Wars will not be stopped by individual conscientious objectors. So long as war continues at all, it will commandeer the sources of propaganda so overwhelmingly, will play on the emotions and motives of the populace so skillfully, will lie, as in the last war, so shamelessly and ingeniously that armies will be assembled and the conflict waged to the bitter end, though Leavenworth prison be filled to the garret.

THE TOWERING NECESSITY

The towering necessity, therefore, is not first of all individual pacifism, overemphasis on which may well prove a red herring across the real trail. The towering necessity is the creation of substitutes for war. We are engaged now in the most momentous race in history between the next debacle and the provision of substitutes to take the place of it. I believe in the league of nations, not because I think it ideal but because I think it the most promising nucleus of organized internationalism in the world. I believe in the world

court, not because I think it a glorious finality leaping full statured from the head of the league, but because it is the most hopeful beginning we have around with which to build up a codification of international law. I believe in the outlawry of war, not because I think that all the juridical agreements of all the governments on earth to outlaw war are in themselves sufficient to stop it, but because the outlawing of war is the very gist of what we are after and any approach which does not envisage outlawry as the goal and an important part of the method is in so far paltering with the issue.

Unless we can by established confidence in one another, by an intelligent organization of mutual interests, by an accepted codification of international law, and by consequent disarmament build up an assurance of security which the peoples of the world will trust, we will have another war. And then precisely how many conscientious objectors there are does not matter much. Civilization will go to pieces anyway.

Third, this question of war with its implied problems of nationalism, racial prejudice, and economic imperialism, presents the most crucial collision with Christianity that we are facing today. This generation, as history looks back on it, will be known chiefly by what we do about war, its causes, and its prevention. Moreover, our present Christian churches will be judged by our children on this basis, as we ourselves judge the churches of two generations ago by their attitude toward slavery.

OUR GENERATION RESPONSIBLE

Personal religion is perennial. Any minister who neglects it will soon have no real church and he deserves to have none. But repeatedly in Christian history some special challenge of the times has taken form and become the rock of standing or falling for the churches. The location of this crux in our time is not difficult to see. War, the economic imperialism that is war's major root, dollar diplomacy with its constant irritation and aggression, the racial prejudices that embitter our feelings, the nationalized thinking that befuddles our minds, the tribal gods that a false patriotism so inevitably substitutes for God, and the spirit of lying and all uncharitableness that precedes, informs, and follows war—these are our special Antichrist today.

This, in brief, is my spiritual pilgrimage from those early days when, proud as Punch, I saluted the major and presented to him the battalion in the full panoply of dress parade.

A Grave

A GRAVE seems only six feet deep
And three feet wide,
Viewed with the calculative eye
Of one outside.

But when fast-bound in the chill loam
For that strange sleep,
Who knows how wide its realm may be?
Its depth, how deep?

JOHN RICHARD MORELAND.

Abolishing the 34th Parallel

By C. H. Allen

THE 34TH PARALLEL divides Persia into two parts. The southern half is somewhat larger in area, but the northern half has the greater population. In the days when the country was divided into two "spheres of influence" it was the northern half that was dominated by Russia and the southern by Great Britain. The first missionary to enter Persia in modern times was an Englishman, Henry Martyn, who located for a time in Shiraz, a city in the south. Twenty-four years later came two American missionaries to Urumia in the extreme northwest. From those days till now the work has spread till there are mission stations and churches all over the country. The Americans kept to the north and the English to the south. Over ninety per cent of the missionaries in Persia today are sent out by two societies, the board of foreign missions of the Presbyterian church in the U. S. A. and the Church missionary society of the Anglican church. And when these two societies came to delimit their boundaries they fixed on the 34th parallel as the dividing line.

Naturally the churches that were founded assumed in general the form of the home churches to which the missionaries belonged. Those of the south are Episcopal and constitute the diocese of Persia under the see of Canterbury. The bishop in Persia is under canonical vow of obedience to the archbishop of Canterbury; the doctrine, form of worship and polity are those of the Anglican church. The churches of the north are Presbyterian in organization; that is to say, the separate churches are governed by elders, but the individual churches are quite independent of one another. A presbytery was organized and still exists, but most of the churches do not belong to it. It is kept alive for the sole purpose of ordaining new candidates to the ministry. The reason why it has not been developed and given greater importance has been the hope that a single church organization for all of Persia might eventually be formed.

SEEKING A UNITED CHURCH FOR PERSIA

Could such a united church of Persia be attained? With the growing spirit of nationalism in the country any Persian Christian would naturally desire a united independent Persian church. We missionaries deeply longed for it, prayed for it, and felt that such union was of vital import to the progress of Christianity in this land of Islam. But there was the 34th parallel! Some geographer had drawn it on the map years ago. We had had nothing to do with it. And centuries back there had been church councils and assemblies in which we had had no part. And as a result there had grown up different ministries which looked questioningly at each other. There were bishops and there were presbyters. There was liturgical worship and there was free worship. There were the Thirty-nine articles and the Westminster confession. And between the one and the other ran the 34th parallel.

To the Persian Christians there was no great problem. They knew little of the historical and practical difficulties. I say it with pride that my fellow-missionaries are too

broad-minded ever to have laid emphasis on denominational differences. I doubt if there was a Persian Christian in all of Persia who could have told the difference between an Episcopalian and a Presbyterian and how the difference originated, unless he had read it in some book. Our first All-Persia interchurch conference was held in 1925 and for the first time the Persian Christians from the north and south met together and realized the differences in their forms of worship, but they unanimously voted to work for a united church.

HOME CONNECTIONS MAKE TROUBLE

The problem was partly practical, largely historical. The churches were one in their beliefs, which made things far easier. They were different in polity, but still immature enough to be plastic. The great difficulty was the connections with the home churches. In talking the matter over with one of our Persian Christians he said to me: "I have heard that when they elect a new pope, the cardinals are all locked up in a room and kept there until they secure an election. I think the thing to do is to lock you and the bishop and some of the other missionaries in a room and keep you there until you reach an agreement on the basis of church union. Whatever you agree to, the rest of us will accept." I laughed and said, "Your idea of getting some of us missionaries locked up in a room is all right. But after you get us there the thing to do is for the rest of you to go ahead and draft your plan of union. You'll get a quicker and more satisfactory union that way."

This last summer the second All-Persia interchurch conference was held in Isfahan and the great problem before it was church union. Could we hope to achieve in Persia what our churches at home had been unable to accomplish? In America it was the general assumption in the ecclesiastical circles with which I was familiar that it was hard enough for Presbyterians to unite with Congregationalists or Baptists, but union with Episcopalians was unheard of. How could we help the Persian Christians to an adequate understanding of the problem without at the same time injecting doubts and perplexities by too full a presentation of western denominationalism? On the one hand we must not force premature decisions on an unprepared church; on the other we must not wait till the churches had passed their plastic state and become irreparably fixed in form and organization. And would the home churches allow us freedom to work out our own union unhampered?

SIGNS OF FRIENDLINESS

The difficulties were many, but our hearts were all set on union. All over Persia prayer had been going up for this common object. One of the northern churches, thinking friendly acts to be worth more than hours of discussion and hearing that the church missionary society mission in the south had suffered a heavy reduction in their appropriations from home, had sent \$100 two years in succession out of a budget of \$1500 to help them in their hour of need. The Spirit of God was working,

The conference convened on July 23rd. Every district of Persia having organized churches was represented. There were about 50 official delegates besides many visitors. Nearly half the delegates were converts from Islam; the rest were Jews, Armenians, Assyrians, English and Americans. A deep spirit of fellowship prevailed. The keynote of the conference was unity. A special hymn had been written in Persian whose refrain was, "Unity, unity, in Christ unity."

A NOTABLE REPORT

A committee of ten, five from the south and five from the north—an English bishop, an English archdeacon, two American clergymen, an Assyrian pastor, a Jewish school principal and four converts from Islam—was appointed to draft the report on church union. This frankly recognized that it was too early to effect the complete organization of a single evangelical church for Persia, first because the members needed more education in the meaning, organization and history of the church to appreciate the problems involved, and secondly because the representatives of the Anglican church were not as yet free to conclude such a union as would be acceptable to all. Nevertheless the committee set itself to the task of laying down the general principles that must constitute the basis of ultimate union, using as a starting-point for their discussions the agreement reached by the joint conference of the representatives of the Church of England and the federal council of the evangelical free churches in England at their meeting in 1922. This section of the committee's report, as translated, is worth quoting:

We offer the following fundamental principles to serve as a doctrinal and practical basis for a United evangelical church of Persia:

1. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain God's supreme revelation of truth, which is summed up in the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ; and nothing should be required as an article of faith which is not read therein or may not be proved thereby.
2. We accept the Apostles' creed as a simple statement of the main tenets of the Christian belief and an appropriate confession of faith to be used at the time of baptism. We regard the Nicene creed as a fuller statement of Christian belief and a more adequate expression of the corporate faith of the church. We believe that the use of these creeds in worship, while not binding on any church, will prove a helpful expression of united belief; and we feel that assent to them should allow of reasonable liberty of interpretation.
3. While accepting these creeds as a historical expression of faith, we also recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit in the church as a competent guide both to new understanding and expression of truth and in the future development of the church.
4. We regard the church as the body of Christ and his Spirit abiding in its members as the source of its life. There can be only one church and this consists of all those in times past and present who have been saved through faith in Christ. As a visible organization the church was founded by Christ as the means of the growth of the kingdom of God on earth. Local churches are representatives and parts of the one catholic church.
5. We look upon the following as necessary outward marks of the church: (a) profession of faith in God as incarnate in Christ; (b) Christian conduct on the part of its members; (c) fellowship in Christian worship; (d) observance of the sacraments ordained by Christ; (e) ministering officers to

preach the word, administer the sacraments, and maintain the unity and purity of the church.

6. Whereas local churches should be free to adopt such forms of worship as they may choose, a closer approach to a common standard than now exists, and one better adapted to the Persian genius, is highly desirable.

7. The sacraments ordained by Christ are two: baptism, the sign of admission to the church; and the Lord's supper, the sign of fellowship with Christ.

8. We regard the ministering officers of the church as representatives of the whole church and as receiving their authority and commission from the church as a whole. We believe that the ministering officers of the united church in Persia should be elected by this church and should be recognized by every part of it as endowed with authority to perform all the functions pertaining to their offices throughout this church; and all ministers of either section, ordained to office by the laying on of hands before the consummation of the union, should thereafter be similarly recognized.

9. We feel that in the united church of Persia the offices of episkopos (bishop) and presbuteros (presbyter), both mentioned in the New Testament, should be preserved in some form; and that at the same time the rights of the local congregation, in accordance with New Testament teaching, should be fully guarded so as to produce and preserve the harmonious working of the whole body of the church and to prevent undue concentration of power in the hands of a single person or group of persons.

10. We feel that in the united church of Persia no distinction as to race or nationality should be made a qualification for membership or office-holding, though we earnestly look forward to the time when the highest offices shall be held by national ministers.

11. We believe that the united church of Persia ought to be subject to the jurisdiction of no existing division of the church, but must be free and unhampered in working out its own development, though we most earnestly anticipate its being a constituent part of the great reunited church, and we urge that every forward step should be taken with this in mind.

IMMEDIATE STEPS

The rest of the report dealt with immediate steps to be taken toward effecting this union. These include the education of the churches to prepare them for a better understanding of the problems of union; requesting the Church of England to extend to the diocese of Persia independence from the see of Canterbury, that its bishop and ministers may be free to take such steps as they feel led of God to take toward the consummation of the united church of Persia; application by the ministers of the East Persia presbytery to the general assembly of the Presbyterian church in the U. S. A. for the dissolution of this presbytery; interparticipation of both churches in future ordinations of ministers prior to the consummation of union; closer approach in the forms of worship; and above all a call to prayer "for the maintenance of the spirit of unity among the churches of Persia and for the consummation of union both among the evangelical churches of Persia and among all the divisions of the great church universal."

This report was adopted by the whole conference without a dissenting vote. No Christian in Persia wants a 34th parallel. If we fail to abolish it, it will not be the fault of the church in Persia, but because of hindrances imposed from the church at home. What a crime that would be!

By geographical definition a parallel is an imaginary line. I wonder if many of our ecclesiastical parallels in Europe and America are not imaginary lines too!

JANUARY SURVEY OF BOOKS

Religion and Experience

Reality in Religion: the Quillian Lectures at Emory University for 1927. By Gilbert T. Rowe, Cokesbury Press, \$1.75.

THE ABLE DISCUSSION of "the universal trend toward the scientific treatment of religion," by Dr. Rowe, with its valuable contribution to the empiricist reconstruction of theology, generously acknowledges its indebtedness to the writings of radical empiricists like Lee, Macintosh, Wieman, Streeter, William James and others and is worthy of a place among them. With these thinkers, Dr. Rowe collaborates in the radical critique of intellectualism, of a priori speculation and metaphysics, of dogma and the intrusions of authority into the realm of freedom, and he joins hands with them in the "religio-empirical approach" to the verities of religion.

The attempt to introduce the experimental method of reasoning into philosophy, made two centuries ago, has scored some notable victories in recent American thought. All our philosophy, especially that of religion, has changed its tune radically during the last fifty years. The absolutist philosophy, with its a priori speculations and serene self-assurance that everything in this universe of ours from the songs of heaven to the fires of hell is perfectly and transparently rational, has been done to death. Overthrown in continental Europe about fifty years ago, it found a city of refuge in conservative English and American circles for another quarter of a century. But even these strongholds have yielded to the transforming influence of the higher empiricism. The anti-rationalistic crusade and the critique of intellectualism have yielded decisive results. The rationalistic ideal of a "religion within the boundaries of pure reason" never has been much more than a private fancy of philosophers. It might charitably be characterized as a sunny library religion cunningly devised in sweet oblivion of man's social and cosmic environment. The forceful meaning of God has always been found in experience, and always will be. A new situation is upon us. The scientific method having conquered philosophy, now knocks at the gates of theology. Indeed it has already superseded in large measure speculation and dogma in the discovery and statement of the truth and worth of religion.

A glance at the direction and distance traveled will throw light on the momentous changes going on around us. Lotze in Germany, Renouvier in France, Hodgson in England and James in America are representative men who have progressively substituted a radical empiricist attitude for the rationalistic procedure in the philosophy of religion. Under the contagion of their example, the effort to introduce the experimental method of reasoning into philosophy has gone from victory to victory. When and where the absolutist philosophy had domain, it was considered "treason to pay any attention to facts." It "must be in toto a priori speculation." Of this method Dr. Rowe simply remarks that "it is too barren to demand serious consideration." It begins, proceeds, ends alike in the land of dreams and fancies and impenetrable fogs.

Fixing attention upon American thought, the transition from the absolute idealism of Hegel to the radical empiricist attitude of "Reality in Religion" crosses the line between two epochs of religious thought. Well did that eminent theologian, the late Ernst Troeltsch of Berlin, say of William James' abandonment of Platonism and his substitution therefor of empiricism in the philosophy of religion, that it constituted "the first thoroughgoing contribution of America" to this branch of philosophy. James, who disclaimed all originality, has simply seized

upon the more practical empirical bent of west-European protestantism, most clearly traceable in pietism, and has elevated it to a principle of method. The *cum experientia testatur* of Luther, buried for a time under protestant scholasticism, likewise the abandonment of speculation and dogma and the return to religious experience by Wesley—attitudes typical of the very genius of protestant Christianity, now at length emerge victorious in our philosophy of religion. Religion set free from the coercive restraints of ecclesiastical dogma and of absolutist philosophy, now seems none the worse for trusting the sanctions of experience, in which, along with historical religion and scientific method, reason and authority may have their modest and rightful though subordinate place. James pointed out that a "new era in religion as well as in philosophy will be ready to begin" as soon as the standpoint of experience gets itself accepted in theology and philosophy. "That era," Dr. Rowe confidently and as I think rightly asserts, "has dawned."

Here are the tell-tale facts. The "skirmisher's shot" in the battle between monistic idealism and the higher empiricism which has always been the quickening spirit in protestant Christianity was fired about fifty years ago. The idea of a radical empiricism in the philosophy of religion proved a powerful and irresistible ferment. One thinker after another fell more or less into line with the new standpoint. It was at that time at least new in accent and in its inevitableness. The philosophers began, soon after William James sent his first essays in radical empiricism to the press, to rechristen their systems. A little more than a twelvemonth later, Bowne, apparently as an afterthought of his revision, brought out a new name in the conclusion of his metaphysics. Taking a suggestion from Shadworth Hodgson's "Metaphysic of Experience" wherein "empiricism and transcendentalism go hand in hand" (Preface, p. xiii), Bowne renamed his system transcendental empiricism. About a year later Royce announced in his major work that Absolute Experience would be a better name than Absolute Thought for his philosophy. Further the primary emphasis on thought was to be transferred to will and experience. We may justly regard these changes in terms and accents as a feeble attempt at least to get the "absolute" into good company. More significant, we note Hocking's great book on "The Meaning of God in Human Experience" (note the striking and apt title) with its candid avowal of an "ultimate empiricism" as the basis and boundary of religious knowledge. Thus in their historical order we have four eminent writers on the philosophy of religion choosing to designate their standpoints as respectively a *radical*, a *transcendental*, an *absolute* and an *ultimate* empiricism. These variations all have *empiricism* as their common denominator.

This empiricist transformation of religious thought has wide-reaching importance. Old style rationalism always kept close at hand its *deus ex machina* to come to the rescue when conceptual logic failed or fell into difficulties, mostly artificial. A later rationalism has resorted to its *deus ex experientia* for quite similar purposes. In a word the God of traditional theism whether as the *deus ex machina* or the *deus ex experientia* has been, within the precincts of technical philosophy, little more than a highly convenient waste-basket or catch-all for the insolubles of an intellectualist philosophy of religion. Religious thought is turning its back on this "barren protestant scholasticism," as Dr. Rowe describes it, and is bringing into its rightful primacy the creative experimental principle of protestant Christianity. Dr. Rowe has identified himself with that able group of thinkers who are demanding that theology, the prolific mother of sciences, shall at length herself become

THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S. A.

156 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

March 5, 1930.

To The Members of the Board

Dear Friends:-

At the last meeting of the Foreign Department Committee there was some discussion of the questions involved in the proposed scheme of union of the Churches in southern India. We are not at present involved in this scheme, as none of our missionaries or the Churches which have grown out of their work are related to the bodies which have developed this scheme. Ultimately, however, we are concerned, as in all probability if the southern India scheme goes through a proposal will be made for union between the resulting Church and the corresponding Church bodies in northern India, namely, the Anglican Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church and the United Church of North India, which embraces our missionaries and the Church which resulted from their work, together with the missionaries and resulting Churches of the American Congregational Missions, and the Irish and Scotch Presbyterian Missions.

There will be an even nearer relationship on our part than this to the proposed basis of union in South India through our Missions in Persia which have been considering with the Church of England Mission in southern Persia the questions of the establishment of a United Persian Church.

For several years this matter has been under discussion in Persia, especially between Bishop Linton, the Anglican Bishop in Isfahan who is a most evangelistic and evangelical man, and our missionaries in Hamadan and Teheran. There have been many conferences between the Anglican missionaries and our own and they have been most harmonious. There have been interchange of pulpits and fellowship and common participation in the Communion service. There has been no carefully worked out plan, however, such as the "proposed scheme of union in South India". But there has been discussion of the central issue as to whether we Presbyterians would be prepared for Church union on an Episcopal basis or whether, on the other hand, the Anglican friends in Persia could secure the consent of the Church at home to their union on a basis that surrendered the High Church interpretation of the episcopacy.

The first step in the matter was to be Bishop Linton's presentation of the case to the coming Lambeth Conference. Friends in the Church of England and in the Church Missionary Society,

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which sustains the Anglican work in Persia, felt, however, that it would be better for the issue to come before the Lambeth Conference on the basis of the India scheme. The India scheme is fully worked out; it has the support of all the Anglican bishops in India, a large and representative company including some of the most influential bishops in the Anglican Communion, and it is already thoroughly familiar to the home constituency. What Persia proposes would be in a far less advantageous position and would have only Bishop Linton as its field spokesman, and it does not have the understanding and the backing which the South India scheme has in the home Church.

Mr. Cash, the secretary of the Church Missionary Society, talked over these matters very fully with Bishop Linton, Mr. Allen and me in Jerusalem, and he and I had long conferences over the subject at Williamstown last summer. We were agreed that it was probably better to let the Persia problem wait until the Lambeth Conference has passed on the India scheme.

If, however, our Board is of the opinion that we could not go into any scheme that involved the acceptance of the episcopacy in any form it would not be fair to let our Anglican friends in Persia go forward without some intimation of our attitude. Thus far they have had no word from us that would lead them to think that the path is barred to any possible Church union that involved an Episcopal element in its scheme of government.

In one sense, perhaps, the matter is not for us to decide either in India or in Persia. In both fields the Churches involved are ecclesiastically independent of our General Assembly and are free to determine their own policies. On the other hand, our missionaries are clearly involved in Persia now. In any future proposal in India they will be involved as members of the United Church of North India.

In Persia the situation is incipient inasmuch as the proposed union will be primarily of the Persian Christians who have been converted from Mohammedanism rather than the Assyrian groups. As yet there are no large organized bodies as in India but only a few small congregations.

In any view, however, it would certainly seem to be a wise thing for our Board to consider the question as a general question of policy. Would the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. be willing to consider any scheme of Church union which recognized the episcopacy in any form, or would it not? Of course, the General Assembly is the only body that could determine this matter and it could not do so as regards any union into which it was to enter without reference of the matter to the Presbyteries. The immediate question, however, is not as to whether our Church would consider such a union but whether it would allow its missionaries on the field to cooperate with native Churches which might enter into such union. At this point my own judgment would

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be unhesitatingly affirmative. There is, however, the further question as to how our missionaries should act in the way of promoting or hindering such unions. Should they be neutral, or should they use their influence actively either for or against? This is the real form in which the question would come before us now for discussion.

In order that the discussion might be intelligent the Foreign Department Committee has instructed me to supply some of the necessary material.

The first document to be cited which brings the matter directly into focus is the following letter from Bishop Linton to Mr. Allen and Mr. Wilson, the secretaries of our East and West Persia Missions:

Isfahan, Persia, December 3, 1929.

"I have an interesting communication from the Ecclesiastical Committee of the C.M.S. re our proposals for a United Church here in Persia, and I should be glad to consult you both about it. I shall just acknowledge the letter and say I am consulting you about it and will reply fully later on. Their letter is as follows:

'We are writing you on behalf of the Ecclesiastical Committee of the C.M.S. with reference to the Reunion movement in Persia, of which we have read in the Persia Diocesan Letter and in which we are deeply interested.

'We notice in the Report that the Conference has asked you to present to the forthcoming meeting of the Lambeth Conference, among other things, the need of the Evangelical Churches in Persia for unhampered freedom in working out their own development and, the Fundamental Principles of Union that they have adopted.

'Now, you must have followed with much interest the history of the development of the South India United Church Scheme, and have probably had an opportunity of making a special study of it. You know how complete and elaborate the scheme is and how great care has been taken to preserve every catholic principle and to secure that the United Church may still maintain Communion and Fellowship with the mother Churches. Nevertheless the scheme is not without its critics and some of its provisions have aroused quite formidable opposition in a certain quarter.

'It seems to us that the future of the whole reunion movement, not in India only but in other countries as well, depends largely on how this South India scheme is dealt with at the forthcoming Lambeth Conference, and we cannot help feeling some anxiety lest the fact of having other less mature schemes presented at the same time may

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strengthen the hands of the opponents and so prejudice the case of the South India Proposals. For the sake of the future of the whole Christian Church we feel that we ought to do everything in our power to avoid anything that might make it more difficult for the promoters of the scheme to obtain the approval they so earnestly desire.

'The Persian scheme, so far as we can see, does not profess to be a mature and complete scheme and constitution. It merely lays down principles of union and asks for permission for the Evangelical Churches of Persia to work out their own scheme on these lines and, doubtless, since this was never meant to be its final form, it has not been thought necessary to secure the same precision of expression as is so characteristic of the S.I. scheme, and there are certainly some points in the 'Fundamental Principles of Union' and 'Steps towards Union' in the Persian Diocesan Letter which we fear would immediately be seized upon by the critics and might lead to the rejection of both schemes.

'We therefore want definitely to suggest that another meeting of the Interchurch Conference (or some other committee competent to act for it) be called, to meet between now and Lambeth, in order to work out the scheme of union for Persia as fully and completely as has been done for South India. In doing this the conference will have the advantage of having before it the S.I. scheme, to which so much time and thought have been devoted, and which has gained so large a measure of assent throughout India. To avoid delay we are sending you, under cover, twelve points of the S. I. scheme. We need hardly say that, if it were possible for the Conference to adopt this scheme and present an identical plan for Persia, it would mean an immense strengthening, not only of the case for South India, but of the whole Reunion movement throughout the world.

'In our judgment it would be a great gain if your Interchurch Conference found it possible to adopt the principles laid down in pages #1 to #11 of the South India proposals. The details of a constitution could be worked out if desired, after the Lambeth Conference has met. If this procedure could be followed you would be providing a most valuable illustration for Lambeth of the way in which other countries are prepared to go forward towards unity on the four points of the Lambeth pronouncement of 1888 as adopted by the Churches in South India.

'We realize that you may feel that the time is very short to do all that we suggest. We want you to know that the Ecclesiastical Committee is anxious to help in any way possible. You may feel, for instance, that you have not the necessary legal advice at hand; the Ecclesiastical Committee will gladly undertake to have any proposals you may send us cast into

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formal shape for you in time for Lambeth Conference, and thus it would only be necessary for you to send us the proposals in the form in which they are passed. If they can be made to take the form of alterations to the S. I. scheme the work will be so much the lighter for the Committee.

'In conclusion, we have only to assure you of our warm sympathy with you in the work you are doing, of your deep interest in the Reunion movement in Persia and our constant prayers for God's blessing upon you and the diocese over which you preside.

'Very faithfully yours,

(Signed) H. W. Hinde
John Hind, Bp.'

"With regard to the foregoing, H. W. Hinde is a prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral, a very strong Evangelical, who led the opposition to the Revised Prayer Book, and he is a personal friend of mine and one whom I can trust. Bishop Hind is Bishop of Fuhkien in China, and is also leading a big movement toward unity in China. He is a C.M.S. missionary, and a staunch Evangelical, and has taken a bold lead in Intercommunion services. I also know him personally and can trust him absolutely.

"At our Diocesan Conference on November 22nd the following resolution was passed unanimously:

'Interchurch Union - The Bishop spoke of the possibilities of Church Union in South India, and proposed that a Committee be elected from the Northern and Southern Churches to go through the Proposals of the South India United Church and that what they agree to and approve be put forward for acceptance by the Persia Churches. Carr Unan.

'The archdeacon therefore proposed that four members from the North and four from the South should be elected, and that the election of four members of this Committee from the South be held in the Diocesan Council. Carr Unan.

'There was a proposal made that the four members should be one English and three Persians. No decision was arrived at as to the membership of the Committee.'

"I should be very glad if you would both go through the South India Proposals, and let me have your opinion as to the possibility of falling in with the proposals in the foregoing letter from Prebendary Hinde and Bishop Hind. Perhaps you would also consult as many members of your Mission as possible, and if possible any of your local church whom you think could express a useful opinion, and let me know what you feel about it. I will also go through the S.I. proposals and write again to you, and I shall consult Garland and if possible some Persian Christians also. I am strongly of the

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opinion that before I go to Lambeth we ought to go very carefully into the S.I. proposals with a view to making our own proposals more definite. The opposition is on the part of the extreme Anglo-Catholics, headed by Bishop Gore, though an Anglo-Catholic like the late Bishop of Bombay supports the S. I. scheme. The others threaten to lead a secession from the Church if the present scheme of S.I. passes.

"Would you consider a suggestion that we should have a small preliminary meeting, say in Teheran, almost immediately, to study together the S.I. proposals? I should very gladly go either to Teheran or Hamadan and possibly I might get Garland to go with me. My feeling is that if a few of us (missionaries) got together and went through the S.I. scheme, we could then more usefully have a larger meeting with several Persians to draw up additions or alterations to our present scheme for presentation to the churches, and then if necessary plan to have another Interchurch Conference, say in Teheran, about No Ruz.

"Yours very sincerely, (Signed) J.H. Linton,
Bishop of Persia."

This letter has been forwarded by Mr. Allen with the following statement:

"Church Union - I was just on the point of writing Dr. Speer on the subject of church union when his letter came. He will be much interested in a letter which has just come from Bishop Linton, of which I enclose him a copy. I have written him in reply that I shall be glad to meet him in Teheran (probably some time next month) to talk the matter over with him informally together with some of our other missionaries. I should be very glad indeed to have Dr. Speer's reaction to the South India proposals, whether he thinks them a feasible solution of the problem, and what he thinks our Church at home would say to such a solution (though I understand that our Church does not wish to bind us in any way in matters of this kind).

"Very sincerely yours, (Signed) C. H. Allen."

The next material which the Board will wish to have is a digest of the provisions in the proposed scheme of union in South India with regard to the episcopate. This scheme contemplates the union of the following:

The Church of India, Burma and Ceylon
The South India United Church
and
The South India Provincial Synod of
The Wesleyan Methodist Church.

The sections relating to the episcopate in the proposed United Church are as follows:

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"THE EPISCOPATE IN THE UNITED CHURCH.

"The uniting Churches, recognizing that the episcopate, the councils of the presbyters and the congregation of the faithful must all have their appropriate places in the order of life of the United Church, accept in particular the historic episcopate in a constitutional form as part of their basis of union, without intending thereby to imply, or to express a judgment on, any theory concerning episcopacy.

"The meaning in which the uniting Churches thus accept a historic and constitutional episcopacy is that in the united Church:

"(1) the bishops shall perform their functions in accordance with the customs of the Church, those functions being named and defined in the written constitution of the united Church;

"(2) the bishops shall be elected, both the diocese concerned in each particular case and the authorities of the united Church as a whole having an effective voice in their appointment;

"(3) continuity with the historic episcopate shall both initially and thereafter be effectively maintained, it being understood that no particular interpretation of the fact of the historic episcopate is thereby implied or shall be demanded from any minister or member of the united Church; and

"(4) every ordination of presbyters shall be performed by the laying on of hands of the bishop and presbyters and all consecrations of bishops shall be performed by bishops, not less than three taking part in each consecration."

"THE INITIAL MINISTRY OF THE UNITED CHURCH.

"The uniting Churches agree

"(1) that the bishops of the dioceses of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon which are to be included in the united Church shall be accepted as bishops of the united Church, provided that they assent to the Basis of Union and accept the Constitution of the united Church;

and that all the other ministers of the uniting Churches in the area of the union shall be acknowledged as ministers of the Word and of the Sacraments in the united Church, each retaining the standing (whether as a minister authorized to celebrate the Holy Communion, or as a deacon or a probationer) which he had before union in his own Church, provided similarly that such ministers assent to the Basis of Union and accept the Constitution of the united Church; and

"(2) that, as is set forth in detail in Section IV of this Scheme, such bishops and other ministers shall, subject only to necessary restrictions in certain directions, retain, (so far as the united Church is concerned) all rights and

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liberties which they previously possessed in the several uniting Churches.

"(3) These bishops and other ministers, together with the bishops who will be consecrated at the inauguration of the union (see Section XV) shall form the initial ministry of the united Church."

"The uniting Churches agree that it is their intention and expectation that eventually every minister exercising a permanent ministry in the united Church will be an episcopally ordained minister.

"For the thirty years succeeding the inauguration of the union, the ministers of any Church whose missions have founded the originally separate parts of the united Church may be received as ministers of the united Church, if they are willing to give the same assent to the Basis of Union and the same promise to accept the Constitution of the united Church as will be required from persons about to be ordained or employed for the first time in that Church. After this period of thirty years, the united Church will consider and decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry."

"BISHOPS: THEIR FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

"(1) The bishop of the diocese has the general pastoral oversight of all the Christian people of the diocese, and more particularly of the ministers of the Church in the diocese.

"(2) The bishop of the diocese, acting in accordance with the rules laid down in this Constitution concerning the worship of the Church, shall acquaint himself with the various methods of worship and forms of service used in the diocese, shall advise the ministers and congregations in this matter, and shall cause to be prepared and shall issue special services and prayers as they may be required from time to time. He shall have authority in the case of grave irregularities in public worship to forbid their continuance, and any such prohibition shall remain in force pending any action which the Executive Committee of the Synod of the Church may take thereon.

"(3) The bishop of the diocese, acting in accordance with such rules in the matter as may be laid down in this Constitution or by the Synod or by a Diocesan Council, shall receive the names of candidates for ordination who have been approved by the bodies and persons required by the rules, and shall make inquiries from the congregation in which the candidate is best known and also from persons to whom he is known (who shall include laity and not fewer than three ministers); and if he considers the candidate fit to be ordained, he shall bring his name before the Diocesan Coun-

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oil or some other body appointed for the purpose, and if it is agreed by the Council or by that body that the candidate should be ordained, the bishop may ordain him, provided he is assured that he will receive some charge or other definite work.

Note-Rules for the selection and training of candidates for ordination shall be laid down by the Diocesan Councils.

"(4) The bishop of the diocese, acting in accordance with such rules in the matter as may be laid down in this Constitution or by the Synod, will give authorizations to ministers to officiate and to preach in the diocese. The location of the ministers shall also be carried out by the bishop of the diocese, after such consultation with diocesan committees or other bodies as may be prescribed by the rules of the diocese.

"(5) The bishop of the diocese alone shall have the power to pronounce sentence of suspension from Holy Communion or of excommunication in disciplinary cases, but he shall do so only after due enquiry has been made by the Pastorate Committee or Panchayat appointed for the purpose in accordance with the rules of the Diocesan Council. Similarly he shall have power on the recommendation of the Pastorate Committee or Panchayat to restore those that are penitent to the fellowship of the Church.

"(6) Charges against a minister shall in the first instance be submitted to the bishop of the diocese, and he shall if possible settle the matter by personal enquiry and advice and, if necessary, admonition, or in grave cases temporary suspension of the authorisation of the minister concerned. But if the bishop shall consider, or the accused minister demand, that the case should be referred to the Court of the Diocesan Council, it shall be so referred. A bishop may not withdraw his authorisation permanently from a Presbyter except by way of carrying out a sentence duly passed by the Court of the Diocesan Council, or in cases where the presbyter voluntarily submits himself to the decision of the bishop.

"(7) The bishop of the diocese shall be president of the Diocesan Council, and shall have the right to take part in the proceedings of any standing committee, board or council of the diocese. He shall have the right of suspending the operation of decisions or resolutions of the Diocesan Council which directly concern:

- (a) the faith and doctrine of the Church,
 - (b) the conditions of membership in the Church,
 - (c) the functions of the ordained ministers of the Church,
- or (d) the worship of the Church and any forms of worship proposed for general use in the Church.

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"(8) Every bishop of a diocese shall ex officio be a member of the Synod of the Church.

"(9) The bishop of the diocese shall not as bishop or as president of the Diocesan Council have any control over the finance of the diocese.

"(10) The bishop of the diocese shall remain such for life, unless he resign, or accept the charge of another diocese, or depart permanently from the diocese, or be deprived of his charge by sentence of the Court of the Synod, or be adjudged by the Executive Committee of the Synod to be mentally or physically incapable of discharging the duties of his office.

"(11) In the event of any bishop seeming to the Moderator to be gravely unsuited to retain charge of his diocese it shall be the duty of the Moderator to take council with the other diocesan bishops, and if they concur in his judgment, to lay their views before the bishop concerned.

"(12) The bishop of the diocese may appoint a commissary either under a general commission to act for him in the diocese during the bishop's absence from his diocese or incapacity to discharge his duties as bishop, or under a special commission to perform on his behalf some particular duty named in the commission. The appointment of a general commissary must be approved by the Executive Committee of the Diocesan Council.

A diocesan bishop cannot authorize his commissary to represent him in the Synod or in any committee or board thereof, or to exercise his suspensory power over decisions and resolutions of the Diocesan Council, nor can he (unless the commissary be himself a bishop) delegate to him his powers of ordination or of confirmation."

"THE ELECTION, APPOINTMENT AND CONSECRATION OF BISHOPS.

"(1) In every election of a bishop both the diocese concerned and the Synod shall have an effective voice.

"(2) Both the Synod and the Diocesan Council shall have the right of making nominations of candidates to be voted upon by the Diocesan Council, but the nominations made by the Synod shall be of not more than three names, and shall not include the name of any person resident in the diocese.

"(3) From the combined list of nominations the Diocesan Council shall elect not less than two and not more than four persons, all of whom must be supported by not less than two-thirds of the number of members of the Diocesan Council present and voting, and shall submit the list of their elections to a board consisting of the Moderator and six members appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod.

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This board shall appoint a bishop for the diocese from among the names submitted by the Diocesan Council.

"(4) The Diocesan Council may if it so desire remit the whole election to a Board of the Synod composed as in Rule 3.

"(5) If a Diocesan Council fails within a prescribed time to fulfil the requirements of Rule 3 or Rule 4, a bishop shall be appointed for the diocese by the Executive Committee of the Synod.

"(6) Every appointment of a Bishop shall be subject to confirmation by the Executive Committee of the Synod, which shall for this purpose include all the diocesan bishops; but this confirmation may not be withheld except when either the election or appointment shall have been proved to have been invalid, or the Executive Committee shall judge the person appointed to be unfit in respect of character, conduct or teaching to exercise the functions of a bishop.

"(7) The Synod will prescribe a form of consecration of bishops, in which, while provision may be made for extempore prayer and other elements of spontaneity and variety, there shall be certain invariable parts; these to include at least (i) a consecratory prayer, asking that the person to be consecrated may receive the gift of God's Holy Spirit for the office and work of a bishop in His Church, and (ii) the laying on of hands at least by three bishops, with the words (if any) accompanying it. The consecration of a bishop shall normally take place in the course of the Communion service.

"(8) No person may be consecrated as bishop unless he has been ordained as a presbyter, and also attained the age of thirty years."

"THE APPOINTMENT OF BISHOPS IN ADDITION TO THE EXISTING BISHOPS.

"Under the proposals made in Section XVI of this Scheme, the dioceses of the United Church will not be established till perhaps five years after the inauguration of the union, and in any case they would not come into existence before the date of union.

"The Joint Committee therefore proposes that the bishops who are to be consecrated at the inauguration of the union should be selected and appointed as follows:

- (a) That the final selection and appointment of those bishops be made by a central body composed of representatives of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, the General Assembly of the South India United Church, and the South India Provincial Synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church;

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"(b) that this central body make its selection from lists of names to be submitted by the central authorities of the uniting Churches in the area of the union, which they should prepare in consultation with the synods and councils under them, indicating in their lists the language area or areas to which each person proposed could most appropriately be appointed as bishop."

These provisions have been attacked from both sides. The High Church party, led by Bishop Gore, declared that they surrendered the essential principles of the Church of England with regard to the historic episcopate, and Bishop Gore has threatened to leave the Church if the plan is approved. He has not said where he would go. The scheme has been attacked with almost equal vigor from the other side in articles in "The United Church Review", the organ of the United Church of North India which is ably edited by one of our younger missionaries, the Rev. J. W. Bowman, on the ground that our Presbyterian system ought not to yield to the Episcopal scheme even as defined in the proposed scheme of union.

The scheme has met with the official approval of the Church Missionary Society which is, as you know, the great evangelical missionary organization of the Church of England, representing moderate churchmanship as opposed to the High Anglicanism of the "Catholic party."

Mr. Cash has sent us the copy of the action of the Executive Committee which has now been adopted by the General Committee of the Church Missionary Society. You will perhaps wish to have the full action of the Church Missionary Society:

"A PRONOUNCEMENT OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME OF UNION FOR SOUTH INDIA

Adopted by the General Committee of the C.M.S.
December 10, 1929.

"Prepared by the Ecclesiastical Committee and approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 27th November 1929.

"1. The Committee of the Church Missionary Society having considered The Proposed Scheme of Union prepared by the Joint Committee representing the Anglican Church, the South India United Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church in South India, for presentation to the governing bodies of the Churches concerned in India and elsewhere, thanks God for the advance that has been made in South India towards the restoration of Christian unity and the elimination of the scandal of ecclesiastical divisions.

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The committee places on record its profound sense of the guidance of the Holy Spirit revealed in the history of the negotiations and also its recognition of the spirit of Christian love and evangelistic zeal which pervades the proposals.

"2. The C.M.S. is interested in the scheme on several grounds. The Society recognizes with thankfulness in the proposed terms of union the acceptance of the four basic facts of faith and order laid down in the Lambeth declaration of 1888 as the ground of unity, thus keeping the way open for a future wider reunion of an episcopal basis. It also welcomes the desire of the Anglican Church in South India to unite with other reformed Churches, since such a desire is in line with the guiding principles of the Society's policy from the earliest days of its history. The Society has never conceived of the differences between the Church of England and the other reformed Churches as being of such a kind as to be ultimately irreconcilable; but, just as it has always recognized the essential identity of the Gospel message proclaimed by missionaries and ministers of those Churches with that which it has sought to proclaim, so it has confidently hoped to find some basis upon which a more formal union could be established.

"3. The C.H.S. has also a particular responsibility in this matter, since the large majority of Indian Christians of the Anglican Communion in the four dioceses concerned (Dornakal, Madras, Tinnevely, Travancore, and Cochin) are within the Society's missions. Moreover, it cannot be too widely known that the desire for unity in South India proceeds primarily from the Indian Christians themselves and has been consistently voiced by the Indian church leaders as well as by missionaries, representing all groups and schools of thought, who have taken part in the proceedings.

"The desire for unity on the part of Christians in South India proceeds from two chief sources. They long to share the fellowship of the Spirit in an Indian Church which shall in its unity abolish the existing ecclesiastical divisions, which are of foreign origin, and transcend the caste divisions of the Indian social order. They also wish to have a united Church as the divinely appointed means to a more rapid advance in the evangelization of a great but predominantly non-Christian land. That 'unity for evangelization' should be a compelling ideal in these young Churches is a matter for special encouragement to a Society which has been largely instrumental, under God's providence, in spreading the knowledge of the Gospel in South India.

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"4. In the claim of the proposed United Church for autonomy the Committee sees not only the expression of a legitimate desire for Christian freedom but also the fulfilment of the work of the foreign mission foreshadowed in the ideals for missionary policy announced so long ago as 1851 by Henry Venn. At the same time the readiness and care of the United Church to retain full communion with other branches of the uniting Churches, both in India and elsewhere, obviates that weakening of the universal character of Christianity which would attend the establishment of such a Church as merely a national unit. The Committee welcomes the frank recognition shown by the authors of the scheme of the fact that the Christian Churches which are taking form among the Asiatic and African peoples possess the responsibilities and powers of autonomous parts of the Catholic Church.

"5. The Committee desires to recognize the wisdom of the several Churches in South India revealed in their decision to leave for subsequent adjustment certain matters of real ecclesiastical importance but yet of a secondary character. By the provision of a period in which these Churches may grow into full spiritual unity and find the solution of certain questions now left open in a new and united life and experience, there is indicated the determination to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit the Guide and Teacher of the Church.

"The Committee believes that the more closely the suggested provisional arrangements are examined the more clear it will become that they do not violate the historic traditions of the Church of England; it also believes that there are sufficient precedents in the history of the Church of England at home to justify the sanctioning of the South Indian proposals by the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon. Those who demand in regard to an adventure of faith which aims at Christian unity, that all the possible results of action shall be shown in advance to be manageable and safe are, in effect, insisting that the policy of the Church shall be governed rather by human prudence than by courageous faith in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Not thus did the apostolic leaders of the Church legislate in the first creative period of its history.

"6. On behalf of a Society, which represents an important part of the Church of England organized for evangelization overseas; the Committee has taken careful account of the fact that while they have not yet pronounced on the scheme in its present form, the bishops in the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon have approved the main principle underlying the proposed union. The General Council of that Church, having considered the proposals brought before it by the Episcopal Synod, unanimously passed the following resolution at its meeting in February 1928:

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'Remembering that the Constitutional Episcopate has been accepted for the united Church, and that the clearly expressed intention is to secure an episcopally ordained ministry throughout the Church, we are prepared with a view to bridging over the period till this is fully attained, that to all who at the time of union are ministers of the uniting Churches should be accorded after union the position of ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the united Church.'

"The Committee is also satisfied that none of the proposals relating to Church order go beyond the terms of the Lambeth Appeal of 1920. The principles upon which the recognition and adjustment of existing ministries in the united Church should be made in the interim period appear to be the natural application of the terms of that Appeal and the Memorandum of the Church of England representatives on the Joint Conference which followed the last Lambeth Conference.

"7. The Committee, therefore, after much thought and prayer desires to express its cordial approval of the principles of the scheme for unity as now drafted. In doing so it is confident that it represents the feeling and judgment of the very great majority of the members of the Society, who will be prepared strongly to support the scheme, primarily because they believe that the movement which has led to it is in accordance with the mind of Christ. The Committee hopes that all Christian churches and agencies concerned, may together pray and labour for the consummation of this union, moving forward as partners together in the task of building up the ever-growing Catholic Church, which is the Body of Christ upon earth."

There have been many articles written on this whole question. One of the most illuminating series is in the January issue of Sir Henry Lunn's large quarterly, "The Review of the Churches." This issue was given up chiefly to a discussion of the South India scheme, and the writers represent both the favorable and the antagonistic views.

At the meeting of the General Assembly of the United Church of North India held in Lahore in December, of which Dr. Velte was the Moderator, a deputation from the Methodist Episcopal Church presented a proposal for union. In presenting this proposal Dr. Stanley Jones dealt with the question of the episcopacy in the terms in which it is known in the Methodist Episcopal Church. A summary of his address in the Indian Christian paper "Dnyanodaya" of January 23, 1930, as follows:

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"Fathers and Brethren! I find that you use the same form of address as we do. I began life in the M.E. Church South. Later we moved one mile and I joined the M.E. Church (North). So my deep-seated conviction in this matter of Church polity resulted from our family moving one mile!

"The Churches are all being cross-fertilized, whether we like it or not. Below the surface of our ecclesiasticism, we strike the same note of experience together, and we are one in the deepest and most penetrating facts of our life. What hinders us from being literally one? Mainly extraneous things. I am not usually in the role of representing a denomination. I want here to represent an attitude. We yearn for a larger fellowship. We find ourselves close, yet distant. We Methodists are one of the hardest nuts to crack in Church union discussions. We have had no part in the South India negotiations, because, frankly, they do not know what to do with us. Our bishops are not sufficiently valid for them. With you, on the other hand, they are too valid!

"There is also with us the international difficulty. We are the only Church which is trying to project an international Church. Our General Conference (in America) has representatives from all the world, and we are working together for racial solidarity. Is it better for us to lose our internationalism for the sake of local union? It is not an easy choice for us.

"Our bishops are frankly a difficulty in the way of union. I was a bishop for twenty-four hours, and so I know how it is. They are frankly not valid as regards the past. To my mind, the question is not, 'Are they valid?' but 'Are they vital?' Use the pragmatic test. I simply yawn when people talk about validity of the past. I think that on the whole, they are vital. You have an ingrained prejudice against bishops, which we share with you. Our bishops were not so called by Wesley; they were called 'General Superintendents.' We are willing to let the term 'bishop' go, and call them by the earlier title.

"Now what our Commission authorizes me to say is this: You are united at the top, but not at the bottom, except loosely. You could not be looser and come into a union to contain us as we are. Could your group and ours come together, and let us retain our international solidarity and our bishops as we are? We do not say, 'Take our bishops,' unless you like them. But let us keep them for ourselves. If you like them, you can take them later. We do not say, 'Have episcopal form, or presbyterial or congregational. Put the three together and live together, and see what comes out! I am not proposing 'companionate marriage,' but it is something like that!

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"Could you make the jump and take in episcopal supervision? Our Bishops are amenable to reason, when backed by the General Conference. They are only presiding officers, and have no vote, and do not discuss. We decide, and they execute. They are assigned to work for four years, and then we may put any of them on the shelf, if we wish. Sometimes men who have been loud in discussion have been voted to the silence of the episcopal bench!

"Bishops as executive officers are able to swing great things quickly. Democracies are slow to act. I find that in your system churches frequently are unable for some time to elect pastors. Bishops would settle the matter in an hour.

"Could we leave alone the local situation for the present, and come together in some great central gathering? Our Indian people are not yet ready to give up their international solidarity, and require education. The General Conference has given us the power in India to elect bishops, either for a term or for life. If term bishops are appointed, the margin between them and your moderators is narrowed.

"Once a little girl was trying to put together a puzzle map of the United States, and could not do it, until she discovered that on the back was the face of George Washington, which she knew and loved. So she put that together, and when she turned it over, she found that the map of the United States was there allcomplete! Could we not start back with the face of Christ, be one in Him, and then if we turn our map, we would find ourselves united!

"We are one with you in holding to the equality of every believer. Let us begin at the centre, and not try to tinker at the margin. If you can make your cords longer, and set your stakes farther out, you will find us ready to accompany you. India is struggling to be united politically and socially. We cannot face this struggle, unless we are united. The Church cannot speak a valid word to India of today unless it is united. I believe that word can be spoken."

Following this address and subsequent discussion, the General Assembly of the United Church of North India took action as follows:

"RESOLVED, that the Assembly is disposed to recognize, with profound thankfulness, divine leading in the unexpected invitation extended on behalf of their Union Commission by the fraternal delegates from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that we present to them now an outline of a union scheme which may be used for the education of their people in view of the Central Conference meeting due at the end of 1930.

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"That the Assembly rejoices to learn that the Church Polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church includes the three factors embodied in the Lucknow Resolution on this subject; that in the administration of the sacraments there is no essential difference between the Methodists and ourselves; that they, like us, accept the common faith of the Christian Church throughout the ages in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord; and that while the international connection is valued the Central Conference is in process of becoming more and more autonomous.

"That the Assembly submits for the consideration of either the Union Commission or the Executive Board (meeting in February 1930) of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or (preferably) of both these Bodies, the following outline of a Union scheme, subject to amplification or modification by the next Round Table Conference, which, it is hoped, will be summoned at as early a date as possible:-

"DRAFT SCHEME OF UNION WITH THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

"(Note:-It is understood that this Union may come into operation only after it has been duly passed by the parties concerned, viz., by the Methodist Central Conference 1930 and General Conference (meeting in America in May 1932) and by the United Church of Northern India Church Councils and General Assembly, or its Executive Committee (say in 1931). It may thus be possible for this union to be consummated and inaugurated at the General Assembly due to be held in ordinary course towards the end of 1932. This, however, may depend on whether Wesleyans, Baptists or others also decide to join.)

"RESOLVED, that the two Churches recognize each other as belonging to one body in Christ and determined to work together as one Church.

"That, uniting on the constitutional basis suggested in the Lucknow Resolutions and on their common acceptance of the faith of the Christian Church of all ages in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, they agree to respect each other's confession, organization and discipline, until such time as complete amalgamation is found feasible.

"That, to begin with, the union be made a reality by the Methodist Central Conference appointing delegates to the General Assembly, which will thus become the Supreme Court, and may thenceforth be called the General Council of the United Church.

"That in preparation for this hope--for union the Assembly sanction immediate attempts being made to cooperate on these and similar lines, viz.,

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- (a) In theological education.
- (b) In a Church magazine.
- (c) Through interchange of Ministers.
- (d) By visits of fraternal delegates from Church Councils to Annual Conferences, and vice versa, in the various areas.
- (e) That we invite the Methodist Bishops to include our congregations in their visits, and that likewise our Moderator be prepared if invited, to visit theirs.

"That the Assembly authorize its Committee on Church Union to take charge of this Union proposal, and, when sufficient progress has been made (which may possibly be judged to be after the next Round Table Conference or after the meeting of the Methodist Central Conference in the end of 1930), after further consideration by the representatives of the M.E. Church and the United Church of Northern India, with the representatives of any other Church or Churches prepared to go forward to union on the lines now laid down, to forward the scheme to the Executive Committee of Assembly, in order that it may take the opinion of Church Councils as expeditiously as the constitution permits, and thereafter either announce the decision, should it be unmistakable, or, if thought more advisable, summon a special meeting of Assembly at some date before the meeting of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America in May 1932.

"That in future fraternal delegates from any sister Church willing to send them be welcomed at the General Assembly."

This action is not altogether clear to me but Dr. Velte will be able to explain it fully when he arrives on his coming furlough in April.

In the light of the information now supplied, will it not be helpful for the Board to discuss, at least in a preliminary way, the fundamental issue that is involved?

Very faithfully yours,

Robert E. Speer

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